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AKIRA SEGAMI

KAGETORA
カゲトラ

Akira Segami

TRANSLATED BY
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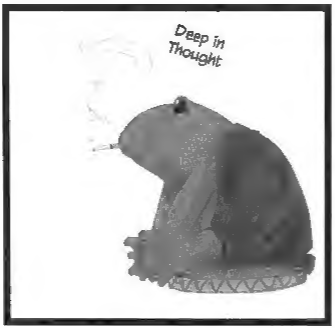
Contents

A Note from the Author.....iv
Honorifics Explained.....v
#31 A Secret Night.....3
#32 Restless Yuki.....43
#33 Confession.....83
#34 A Face Yuki Doesn't Know.....121
Side Story KAGETORA Edo Version ♡.....157

About the Author.....192
Translation notes.....193
Preview of volume 8.....197

KAGETORA

A Note from the Author



After a busy work day, I sometimes want to just sit and space out...Like, at a traditional hot spring inn, drinking sake and gazing out the window...
I know it's impossible but I'm just saying...

Segami

Honorifics Explained

Throughout the Del Rey Manga books, you will find Japanese honorifics left intact in the translations. For those not familiar with how the Japanese use honorifics and, more important, how they differ from American honorifics, we present this brief overview.

Politeness has always been a critical facet of Japanese culture. Ever since the feudal era, when Japan was a highly stratified society, use of honorifics—which can be defined as polite speech that indicates relationship or status—has played an essential role in the Japanese language. When addressing someone in Japanese, an honorific usually takes the form of a suffix attached to one's name (example: "Asuna-san"), is used as a title at the end of one's name, or appears in place of the name itself (example: "Negi-sensei," or simply "Sensei!").

Honorifics can be expressions of respect or endearment. In the context of manga and anime, honorifics give insight into the nature of the relationship between characters. Many English translations leave out these important honorifics, and therefore distort the feel of the original Japanese. Because Japanese honorifics contain nuances that English honorifics lack, it is our policy at Del Rey not to translate them. Here, instead, is a guide to some of the honorifics you may encounter in Del Rey Manga.

-san: This is the most common honorific and is equivalent to Mr., Miss, Ms., or Mrs. It is the all-purpose honorific and can be used in any situation where politeness is required.

-sama: This is one level higher than "-san," and it is used to confer great respect.

-dono: This comes from the word "tono," which means "lord." It is an even higher level than "-sama" and confers utmost respect.

-kun: This suffix is used at the end of boys' names to express familiarity or endearment. It is also sometimes used by men among friends, or when addressing someone younger or of a lower station.

KAGETORA
カゲトラ
#31 A Secret Night

Thanks for today.
It's pretty late.
Are you going to be okay?
I'll be fine!
I'm going straight home.
It's not far anyway.
Okay, but be careful.
DRIP
DRIP
Yeah
Thanks...
Huh?
Rain?
Oh, it was getting cloudy this afternoon...
Takatou-san!
Hime.
So please use this.
I thought you might not have an umbrella.
HERE.

Thank you, Toudou-san!
This helps.
I'll give it back to you tomor-row then.
I'll see you guys!
At school.
Well then... I should return to the hanare.
Oh. Do you need an um-brella?
I'm okay.
It's so close.
Hime.
I'll see you later.
Yeah.
Good night!
Don't catch cold!
Good night.

Today...
...was fun.
TH-THUMP
TH-THUMP
.....
It's best...
...to leave things as they are...
Yup!
SLAP!

Huh?
STOP
My keys are...
RUSTLE RUSTLE
Oh, right.
Okay!
KA-CHUNK
.....
POUR
Yawn.
I should get some sleep soon...
STREEEETCH
it's open.
Is it Hime?
KNOCK KNOCK
Huh!?

Nao!?
Good evening.
What's wrong? It's so late...
Um...
This monkey showed me the way here.
I met him out front.
You have a guest
KYE!
I'm sorry!
Can I sleep over tonight?
Huh!?

I can't go visit one of my girlfriends.
It'll disturb their families.
And it's so late.
And I had nowhere else to go...
I see...
I forgot to bring my keys so I'm locked out.
I forgot that my parents aren't coming home tonight.
They'll be back tomorrow morning.
Thank you! I was worried you would say no.
No problem.
If that's the case, then I guess you can stay.
Hm.
Hope...
I thought I could come over.
And then I remembered that you live alone in the hanare.
You're my last hope.
Oh, okay.
Are you cold?
Achoo!
If you're only using the hanare, then it should be fine.
No... Hime is asleep now.
This is part of her house.
Oh, should I ask Toudou-san for permission too?

Okay!
Thanks.
I'll go get it.
If you don't mind wearing my stuff, I can lend you something.
You'll catch cold like that.
I came over when the rain was at its worst. So I got a little wet.
Ha ha ha
Oh
I'm okay.
SNIFFLE
SWOOSH
But...
...I wonder if this is okay.
HMMM...
SLIDE...
Kagetora.
I wonder if Nao doesn't care...
A girl sleeping over in a guy's room...
...is pretty scandalous.
I think.

Oh! Oh yeah.
I guess she doesn't...
Thanks.
I'm done.
So I bought some stuff before coming here.
SMILE
I thought I should bring something.
RUSTLE
Go ahead and take your pick.
Shrimp shrimp
Tea
Apple
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
I brought drinks, snacks...
Was it that bad!?
Oops.
Oh!
!!
BLEH
GULP
I found it. It looked interesting so I bought it.
You can drink it.
Oh, that.
Hawaiian Nuts Chocolate Chip Soda?
What's that?

Let me try some.
Is it that bad?
SIP
Oh, hey...
It's gross!
No, this is pretty good.
I can take it.
You're over-reacting.
Your sense of taste is not right!!
That's not a drink!
.....
SIP..
MMMM...
I also have this.
Want it?
I'VE NEVER SEEN T♡
Wheat cola
No, thank you.
Oh.
What's that room over there?
Oh. That's the closet.
You think?

パカッ
OPEN
And you have porn hidden in here, right? ♡
Ta-dah!
I see.
Wow! You're right.
Originally, this hanare was used as storage.
Although there's my stuff, too.
ギッシリ
STUFFED
Huh!?
Why would she think that?
...do you not like girls?
I mean, no porn?
Kagetora...
Those are for my work.
CLOSE
Yeah, I can see that...
Work, huh?

Hey, Kagetora.
Huh?
What do you use this for?
A claw?
That's called a tekoukagi.
It's a hidden weapon.
GLANCE
That's why?
Shoot.
I'm getting a little uneasy.
You're not the porn type.
You're so straight-laced.
Hee hee
Ha ha! Just kidding.
No, um... it's not that...
It's just... Um.
I have a big problem because I am interested in a particular girl...
Well.
That's why I felt I could come here.

I'm not good with those kinds of stories.
Like nails peeling off.
Ouch, that's a scary story!
SHIVER
Be careful.
When I was a kid, I was playing with it and scraped off the skin on my hand.
Ow ow ow ow!
Please stop!
What hurt more was when I accidentally stepped on a makibishi...
No, it wasn't that bad.
The injury.
Not a big deal.
Oh.
I just remembered a story my friend told me.
I'll tell it to you.
You know that old apartment complex behind the station?
It's about that.
The room on the corner of the second floor is always vacant.
And that's because...

...at night, a bloody woman ghost appears!
GLOOM
EEP
Can you please not tell that type of story?
DRIP DRIP
Huh?
Do you hate ghost stories?
Um, yeah... sort of.
HA HA...
ITCH
...
...and slashes your throat...
Nao!
Please stop!
WHOOSH!
An old lady holding a sickle appears...
Aaaaghhhh!
You're continuing!
HAVING FUN

.....
THUMP
Ur...
Kage-tora...
Huh?
Nao... I'm really not good with these.
SIGH
WOOSH!
I'm sorry!
No, it's my fault for teasing you.
Sorry.
I'm running out of air...
Huh?
Oh!!

I guess we should go to sleep.
We have school tomorrow.
Nao, you can use that futon over there.
GET UP
Isn't that yours?
I don't have an extra.
I'm sorry, but you can use that one.
What are you going to do?
I'll just sleep somewhere around here.
Like the kitchen...
What!?
No, I can't let you do that!
But...
You're the guest.
I only have one futon.
Oh!
Then I have an idea!
Huh?

Let's sleep together!
!?
WHAT!?
ギョッ!
That's not a good idea!
No way!
It's okay.
We just have to sleep with our backs to each other.
I don't care if we sleep together.
Okay?
And it's so cold tonight, you'll catch a cold without covers!
If you catch a cold, it'll affect our match.
Urgh...
I...
...guess so...
Hmm.

WOOOSH...
.....
Shoot...
ドキ
TH-
THUMP

...Nao?
I wonder if Nao's okay...
Even with our backs to each other...
...I can't sleep with a girl in here.
Are you asleep?
I guess so...
.....
I'm so tired...
DOZE..
Maybe girls have more guts at times like this.
.....
Sigh

CHIRP
CHIRP
CHEEP..
Um...
It's coming....
Mmm...

!?
WAKE UP!
.....
I fell asleep...
TH-THUMP
TH-THUMP
Oh... right
ZZZ

She looks pretty sleeping.
And a little different, too.
Mm...
ROLL
TH-THUMP!
Eep!!
WHOOSH!
uh?
m...

Oh.
DAZED
Yawn...
CRAWL...
Kagetora.
Then I should go home.
My parents should be back.
That's true.
What time is it?
It's a little before six.
The Toudou household is going to wake up soon.
Oh.
Good morning...

...
Be careful going home.
See you later.
Thanks for last night.
Um...
really...
...?
It's nothing.
I'll see you at school!
Dash!

But that was a crazy night.
I feel like I didn't sleep at all.
What was she going to say?
Hm. Oh well.
DASH
DASH
I'm tired...
And sleepy.
Sigh...
ばたっ
FLOP
Did she go home?
KYE
UKYE!?
GRAB
I didn't think she'd sleep over. Surprised.
KYE...

Kosuke!!
KYE...
Uh. but..
Kosuke... you probably know this, but...
...the events of last night should be a secret!
No...
ROLL
...I'd rather they didn't find out...
That helps...
PHEW
KYE KYE...
Okay
Even if they find out, it doesn't affect your "oyakume."
If there was nothing fishy, you should be fine.
KYE?
I don't want her to find out...
DOZE
...absolutely not...

Kage-tora?
SLIDE
Kage-tora?
Are you sleeping?
I'm coming in.
You're going to be late.
DASH...
This umbrella...
Hmm?
Huh?
It's unusual for you to oversleep.
Uh... is that so?
Don't worry, we still have time.
Sorry.
I overslept!
I'm sorry, Hime.
DASH
DASH

ホリィーン
S..EEPY.
ow late
ere you
up?
Yeah...
I couldn't sleep last night.
I'm so sleepy...
You look wiped out.
Dazed even.
Hey, Kagetora, are you all right?
hank you!
This'll wake you up.
Hey, Kagetora. I bought coffee milk.
But you said...
Oh! I... uh...was reading a book...
Ha ha
TWITCH
ホリタッ
Oh! uh...
...not that late!

It's not like I have anything to hide...
Yeah.
Hmm...
Awake yet?
And...
I can't look Hime straight in the face...
Shoot...
SIP..
...my cat came home in the morning.
!?
SPIT!
...?
No, I know you didn't mean to...
Sorry, Kamijo...
Are you okay!?
COUGH GACK
GASP
DRIP
DRIP
I'm not okay.

Lab
Okay
Then start your experiments.
Be careful with the chemicals.
BUZZ
BUZZ
Yes, sir.
DAZED
Hey, Kagetora. Wake up.
You weren't even listening to the teacher, right?
Yeah
Just how sleepy are you?
It's not just my lack of sleep...
GLANCE
It's also...
...the look on Hime's face.
I Feel really guilty...
I wonder if he's okay...

Then on Saturday, Kyoko...
Yeah.
Kagetora, hand me that beaker.
Be careful.
I need to act normal.
Snap out of it!
SHAKE
SHAKE
Aaaack!!
TH-THUMP
...slept over at my house.
CRASH
Please. For our safety.
Yeah, I think I'll do that.
WOBBLE
WOBBLE
Go to the nurse's office.
Get some sleep.
OOPS
FZZLE
That was close.
You're too dangerous!!

Hey, Yuki, he's acting really weird.
WOBBLE
WOBBLE
What's wrong?
I don't know.
I only know that he overslept today.
HMM.
Lack of sleep, and then over-slept?
hat was e doing in the middle of the night?
Maybe something happened last night.
.....
Nurse's office
Excuse me?
Huh?

She's not here...
Oh well, I don't need attention.
And it's actually better to just sleep.
I only need the bed.
There's someone here.
!
Nao!

She's probably sleepy like me.
She doesn't look sick.
Zz.z
Zz.z
Huh? Sleepy?
Mm...
Maybe... Nao didn't sleep either?
.....
Nao? Are you asleep?
I guess so...

What am I thinking?
GASP!

Mn.
ばっ!
WOOSH!
It's probably because I'm sleepy.
I should sleep!

Huh?

There's that feeling again...
...she is pretty.

Kage-tora...?
came ere to sleep.
Oh. I'm too sleepy.
No, it's okay. What's wrong?
Oh...
Sorry, did I wake you?
I guess so.
Ha ha
I thought you fell asleep immediately...
But I was wrong.
Just like me.
Oh.
GRIN

How could I sleep?
.....
Huh?
Well, I guess I should go back.
I've slept enough.
I had a hard time sleeping.
Hee hee
TAP
Kage-tora...?
Okay.
Then I'll stay here and sleep...

You didn't...
...tell anyone about last night, right?
Of course not.
I can't!
Okay.
SIT...
hen...
WOOSH
CREAK..
It's our secret.

You can't tell anyone.
Nurse's office
バーン
SLAM
I'll see you after school at the archery club.
Later!
Then I'm off!
CLICK
Uh.
Yeah...
Last night...?
ビク!
TH-THUMP..

.....
TH-THUMP
Their...
secret...?
TH-THUMP
Kagetora...
.....

Nurse's office
How can I sleep?
.....
You can't tell anyone.
...it's our secret.
Okay, then...

KAGETORA
カゲトラ
#32 Restless Yuki

A secret...
I wonder...
...what she meant?

It's just... that it's stuck in my head.
Hmmm.
Well, I can't put my finger on it.
KYEP
Yeah, I know the definition.
Secret (noun. Something kept hidden from others, something beyond understanding or explanation, a mystery
HM.
It means you can't tell anyone.
KYE!
But after school at practice.
She wasn't acting any differently...
o maybe e didn't mean nything by it.
!
Why am I thinking of that at a time like this?
.....
You're lushing"
KYE!

KYE KYE!!
How are you going to do your duty like that!?
FLIP!
FLINCH
You were probably thinking of something inappropriate.
KYE KYE!!
What are you saying?
I'm not being a good oyakume ninja.
Kosuke's right.
Er...
SIGH
My spirit is all messed up.
KYE
And to have it pointed out by Kosuke...
A monkey.
URGH
But training... that's a good idea.
Hm.
I'm not really wrapped up...
To get wrapped up in girls, it brings shame to the Hoorai clan.
to retrain.
KYE

I need to become mentally stronger!!
If I leave it like this, I can't face Hime.
And I can't focus.
A training retreat will help my spirit and my archery.
So I should practice on my own.
I feel bad for Nao, but...
KYE?
STAND
And I can get out of practicing with Nao, too.
GLARE
Kosuke! I want you to do something!
KYE?
I wonder...
what's their secret?
.....

I can't sleep...
Urgh...
ばふっ
THUMP
Oh, geez
Maybe I'll ask him tomorrow...
Huh?
Training!?

Oh... is that so...
This is where he is
KYE.
He won't come home for a while.
KYE.
He went to go train in an old temple.
TMP
KYE.
TMP
Tell Taka-tou-san?
KYE.
He also wants you to tell the archery girl
That he can't make practice.
I didn't get to ask...
Huh!?
B-A

Spirit training?
Alone?
Yeah... and he wanted me to tell you. According to Kosuke,
Although we know where he is.
Oh... this is in Tokyo?
A temple?
It's in the mountains.
It's a temple that ninjas in Tokyo use to train.
I guess.
And he's going to miss practice.
Oh, I see.
Well, he's fine as he is.
WHISPER
Oh...
...but he won't be around for a while.
Takatou-san?

Oh, sorry. I spaced out for a bit.
Thanks for letting me know.
I'll see you.
Okay.
.....
THUNK!
Well, spirit is important in archery, but...
Spirit training...
.....
DAZED
Hh~~"

That leaves us less time...
It's just... our match is coming up soon.
Yeah.
I'm glad we found a replacement.
Oh, nothing!!
TH-THUMP
Time? For what?
Why are you so spaced out?
But where is he today?
Taking a break?
Yeah.
He went on a training retreat.
Training retreat!?
Whoa.
Totally missed there.
See, you need to be more focused.
Oops.
THUNK
That's fun. Camping alone.
Ha ha ha
Is that like camp?
How fun.

We should go on a training retreat, too.
For mental focus.
Oh! That sounds good. I want to train somewhere other than school.
We're always at school.
Yeah right, we have no money.
Oh, darn.
.....
RUSTLE
RUSTLE

BUZZ
BUZZ
People talking?
I finally feel my old self coming back.
Calm... calm...
It's been two days...
Your mind can't wander off during meditation.
Especially for a ninja.
Master...
No, I heard some people...
WHACK!
Yah!!
Ow!!
A non-ninja coming to this temple?
Who could it be?
No, they're not ninjas.
Can you go greet them?
It's hard to find this place.
There are more ninjas coming?
Oh, right. It's that time already.
Those are guests.

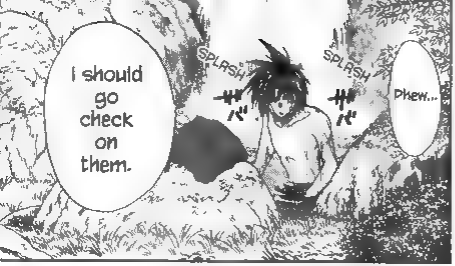
Kage-tora.
PANT...
Why is Nao here!?
.....
Um...
ong time, no see.
n I guess it en't been that long.
Nao... Why are you here?
Oh.
Kazama senpai!
Hello.
Nao, you're too fast.
You just run off on your own.

And then everyone else wanted to, too.
And I figured it might be good for our club.
Nao, what's going on?
I heard you went to go train.
Wow, a temple.
Cool.
Kage-tora.
Master...?
We're supposed to be ninjas.
I asked and he said it was fine.
The monk.
Yeah.
You're going to stay here?
It's not that...
Oh... no.
Are we in the way?

Welcome, everyone.
To want to train when you're so young... that's good.
Yes, yes.
Master..
What's all this?
I'll leave you in charge of everything but the meditation.
TURN
Huh!?
Me!?
They're staying for two days.
Kazama-san, thank you!!
Ack!! I'm in charge of them now!!
I guess I have to do it.
Okay.
I'm sorry, Kagetora.
We're bothering you..
No... it's not your fault.

I didn't think Nao would come.
Well, since there are other people, I guess it's okay.
Wow!
It's big!!
We can stay here?
Wow.
Nao-senpai! What do we do for spiritual training?
Meditation?
Hmm... let's see.
Kagetora, what's your plan for today?
Me?
I finished meditation already...
I was going to go stand in the waterfall.
Oh, that sounds like something we can do.
SMILE
Can we go too?

What!? We're doing it here!?
No way!
ROARRRRR
This isn't for you guys.
It's for me.
Oh. Ha ha.
Thank goodness.
You're over here.
Oh, this we can do!
WOOSH
Then I'll be at the other waterfall.
Okay!
Thanks.
Just call if you need me.
DASH


I should go check on them.
SPLASH
SPLASH
Phew...

WOOOOSH
Oh, they're doing it.

.....

WOOOSH
Why am I staring at her?
DASH
GASP!
.....
It's cold.
I can't do it anymore.
.....
RUSTLE
Phew...
RUSTLE
Gee, what am I doing?
I just keep going around in circles.

RUSTLE
I need more training...
SWISH
SWISH
I need to stop this. What did I come out here for?
There you are.
Nao...
We Finished.
SMILE

No... not always.
Do you always train like that?
It doesn't just help our spirit... it helps us physically, too.
Ha ha
SIT
That was pretty good training.
Ha ha
That's true.
If you guys could be the same, why would I be a ninja?
I guess we can't be the same as you.
Amazing.
Cold, cold.
Ah, I can feel my fingers again.
I know.
But wow.
Our club members are practically attached to the fire now.
Yeah.
Our match is getting close.
I can only be with you for a little bit.

Oh...
Huh?
I'll see you later.
DASH
DASH
DASH
I need to go back!
I'm making everyone wait.
We're going to try meditation now!
SWISH
I'll ask the monk about meditation.
Oh, you can stay here and relax.
Hey.
Nao...

...if these words meant nothing, too...
I wonder...
TMP
タッ
TMP
タッ
TMP
タッ
That was...
...a little...
...too close...
THUMP
Phew.
Woo.
Phew.
Woo.
Phew.
.....

.....
And?
What happened here?
Their feet fell asleep after a long meditation session.
Poor things.
Ack! Don't touch!
Take that.
Er...
Ow...
Although it was only three hours...
The young ones these days are so weak.
So sad.
SIGH
Master... you can't compare them to ninjas.
Uh.

Anyway, the meditation is over.
Okay, sir.
Ow...
You should go rest in your rooms.
Then I'll leave the rest to you.
TURN
Master!?
Again?
need to prepare dinner.
Geez...
Oh!
Good job, Nao.
I guess you were able to endure it.
Uh, yeah...
.....
But you can relax now.
TWITCH
PRI
Oh, no...!
Huh...
THUMP

SQUEEZE
Nao?
Sorry, Kagetora.
Can we stay like this for a bit?

My foot fell asleep.
I can't move.
Ow!
Huh?
Um...
Ha...
You don't have to laugh that much.
Geez.
I didn't want to look bad in front of my club.
You had such a serene expression that I thought...
It's just that...
HEH HEH
Ha!
Ha ha!
Hey, why are you laughing!?
I'm in pain!
Sorry.

Huh?
Um... I'm sorry.
SIT
But I'm glad.
I finally saw you smile.
Yeah.
That's why I'm relieved.
SMILE
No... I'm not mad.
I was surprised.
I thought you were mad.
You came here to train but we're all bothering you.
Hm?
What?
Can I ask you something, too?
Hey, Nao.
When you said that I can't tell anyone in the nurse's office...
What did you mean by that?
Sigh
I feel better.
I couldn't find the right time to ask about it.
So it worried me.

Oh.
.....
Because... it's embarrassing.
For a girl to go sleep over at a guy's place.
Although I had no choice.
So I didn't want anyone to find out...
That's why!!
It didn't look like you were embarrassed.
I thought you had a lot of guts.
Of course it's embarrassing!
I am, after all...
...a girl...
I know you don't see me that way.
Since I'm such a tomboy.
Ha ha
No...
I think you're very much a girl.

Huh?
To tell you the truth... I was really nervous that night.
But you didn't look nervous, so I tried my best to act calm.
I admired you sleeping...
...and you made me realize that I'm lacking training.
So I quickly made arrangements to come here.
Ha ha
Kagetora...
You actually think of me as a girl?
Of course.
What else would you be?
That's why you were nervous?
Yeah.
I...
.....

...was nervous because it was you.
Huh? What?
That night.
When I slept over...
KLUNK
ゴトッ

Hime?
Oh, I brought you something...
TH-THUMP
TH-THUMP
...to eat.
You didn't tell anyone about last night, right?
Nurse's office
Of course not.
Okay, then...
...it's our secret.
It was...
TH-THUMP
TH-THUMP
...about this...

Hime!
Nao!?
Stay here!
...er...
Takatou-san...
Toudou-san!
GRAB

I'm sorry, Toudou-san!
I'm sorry I surprised you.
That night, I forgot my parents were out of town and I didn't have my keys.
I didn't have anywhere to go.
I guess I should've asked you.
.....
And then I realized that Kagetora lived alone.
So I asked him to let me stay.
Huh?
I was going to ask you for permission...
...but it was really late.
Oh, that's what happened.
Yeah...but I'm sorry I made you feel this way.
It's your house.
And I stayed without your permission.

I already disrupted his training.
If I got him in trouble on top of it, I'd be a terrible person.
But I wonder why they kept it a secret.
And she said...
I...
I'm glad.
Really?
PHEW
ほっ
So I'm at fault here.
Kagetora did nothing wrong!
So Kagetora won't get in trouble, right?
...yeah.
It's okay.
I understand.

That night.
When I slept over.
...was nervous because it was you.
Well then...
We should return.
Kagetora's probably worried.
I bet.
.....
How do you feel...
...about Kagetora?
I was wondering...
Takatou-san.
What?
Huh?

TH-
THUMP
TH-
THUMP
.....
A friend...
He's a friend!
A really good friend!
Yeah!
He's a really cool guy.
Like a brother!

Then let's go.
Sorry for asking you something weird.
No problem.
Okay...
didn't bring enough food.
STOP
But I didn't know your club was here, too.
Sorry.
I lied.
Toudou-san.
He's not a friend.
Huh?

I think...
WOOSH
...I like Kagetora.

KAGETORA

#33 Confession

Kotetsu

KAGETORA

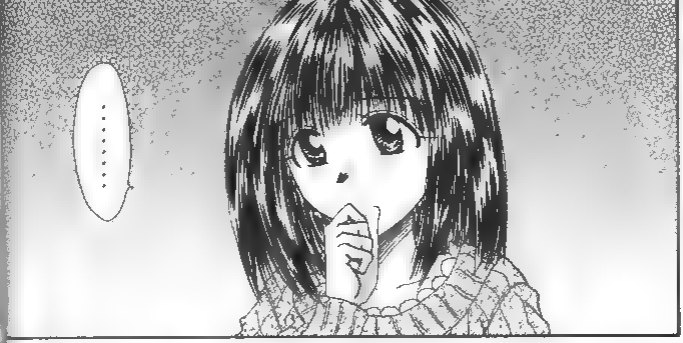
I think...
...I like Kagetora.
.....
Uh...

Does...
Kagetora know how you feel?
I don't think so.
I never told anyone.
Oh!
Toudou-san!
Please keep this a secret, okay!?
Huh...?
I just didn't want to lie to you, so I told you...
Okay.

Huh?
Takatou-san.
I don't want this to get around.
Phew
Good!
Are you .
...going to tell him?
I've never done that before...
No, of course not.
SHAKE
わた
SHAKE
わた
BLUSH
かあっ
.....
Tell him?

So I still...
...don't know.
.....
Oh, there you are.
RUSTLE
Master.
Your teammates were looking for you.
Whoa.
Oops.
Oh! That's right.
It's dinnertime.
Thank you for telling me.
Toudou-san, I'll see you later!
Oh!
TMP
TMP

...“Hime.”
.....
Thanks.
Okay.
And I'll give the food to Kagetora.
I would like to thank you for coming to an old temple like this.
BOW
Oh, nice to meet you. I'm Yuki Toudou.
ZWISH!
I'm sorry... I haven't introduced myself.
My name is Sekkai and I am from the Hoorai clan.
I prepared a room for you.
Please stay there tonight.
I'll have Kagetora stand guard, so...
We shall go.
I cannot let you go home this late.
N'ght falls fast in the mountains.
Huh? But...


.....

.....
They're late...

Hime heard that for sure.
I wonder what she thought...
When I slept over...
That night.
They're not coming back...
Still "staying" there
And...

Should I go check on them?
But... I don't know how to explain all this...
Maybe I should tell her the whole truth?
There wasn't anything fishy...
No, I can't do that!
That'd get me into deeper trouble...
SHAKE
SHAKE
MUMBLE
MUMBLE
HM... WHAT TO DO?
A-HEM!
Whoa!
FLINCH
Night watch for Hime.
Huh?
Hime is staying over!?
I prepared the hanare for her.
So go.
Master!?
You scared me.
I don't know what you're mumbling about...
...but you have a job.
A job?
THUMP
THUMP
THUMP

Night watch, huh?
Sigh...
.....
I can't sleep...
That night...
When I slept over...
I think I like him.

So I still...
...don't know.
I wonder...
...what he'll say.
I wonder...
...will she tell him?
Stupid Kagetora...
Urgh...
THWUMP!

...Hime.
Are you awake?
SIT
スト ン
SILENCE
I guess not...
TWITCH
Well, even if she were...
...I wouldn't know what to say.
I'll just focus on my duty
TAP
Who's there!?
Oh

heard..
...that you were here.
?
Nao?
Sorry to scare you.
I thought you were an intruder.
No.
I'm sorry to bother your work.
Did you need something?
Yeah, about earlier.
I didn't tell you what happened.
Nao...
What did Hime say!?
TURN
She understood and it's okay.
I explained why I slept over.
And she said it wouldn't affect your position.

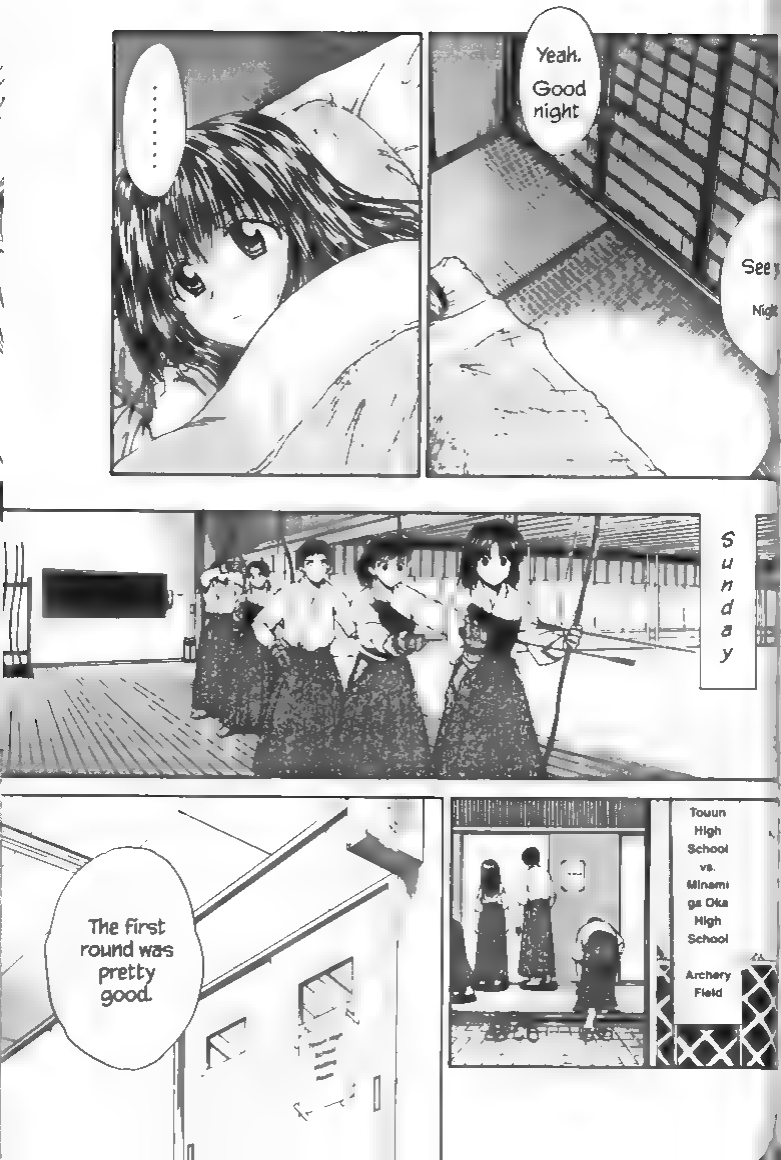
Was she mad?
No.
I don't think so...
I'm so relieved...
はー PHEW
Were you that worried?
Of course.
I am Hime's oyakume ninja.
If she hates me and fires me that would be a problem.
Ha ha
PHEW
はー
I'm envious of Toudou-san.

But...
Oh!
Nothing!
Huh?
Kage-tora.
Can you face the other way?
Like this?
Yeah.
Nao?
TAP

Don't be so touchy!
I'm not a chair.
HA! HA
It's easier to have a chair.
Much better.
I just want to stay like this while we talk.
Yeah.
Thanks for agreeing to do this.
Hm?
Kagetora...
The match is almost here.
It's Sunday
Thanks.
I guess.

But you agreed...I was really happy.
I thoug you'd s no.
We'd never talked, and there I was asking you for a favor.
Oh.
That's why you said okay?
Yeah.
I could tell you were serious about this.
It's becau I saw your shot.
Or else I wouldn't have met you.
Then I'm glad I practiced hard.
Oh.
Nao.

Kage-tora!
Na-
I'm going to head back.
Thanks for being my chair.
TAP
SMILE
Sunday's match!
We're going to win!
.....
Yeah.


.....
Yeah.
Good night
See
Nigh
Sunday
The first round was pretty good.
Touun High School vs. Minami ga Oka High School
Archery Field

Maybe it was the training.
Right.
Ha ha, the effects wouldn't show that fast.
But you guys...
...did well.
Kazama-senpai did well, too!
You're much better than some people on the team.
I'm amazed.
You think?
Yeah, your shots were good.
I guess I fulfilled my duties as a replacement.
You did better than that.
GRIN
Heh
Good.
Why don't you join our club?

I can't do that.
Today's my last day with the archery club.
TH-THUMP
KLUNK
Are you okay?
Yeah, it slipped.
Oopsie.
.....

Nao!
Huh?
What?
TH-THUMP
Huh? Really?
I think it's your imagination.
You're acting a little weird today.
u don't ave the unk you ually do.
Really?
Are you sure you're not sick?
I'm just nervous!
You're such a orrywart.
Okay.
If you say so...
GIGGLE
Let's go!
We still need to go get them!!
PAT
PAT
uh? Oh, eah...

SQUEEZE
Nao?

Kage-tora...
I...
TH-THUMP
TH-THUMP
I...
Hey, they're starting the next round!
GASP
There you guys are.
WOOSH
Sorry! It's nothing!
Nao!
TMP
TMP
We are now starting...
...the next round.

THUNK!

Another bullseye!
WOO!
Whoa!

I've never seen him before.
He looks like a senior.

PHEW
I need to focus!!
WHACK!
Oh... yeah.
Nao-senpai! You're next.
Don't you need to get ready?
PULL
...er...
Today's my last day with the archery club.
I can't do that.

!
Oh...
BUZZ
I'm sorry, I need to go change...
You need to go change the string!!
ZWISH!
Huh!? Kage-tora!?
TMP
TMP
TUG

Hey, Kage-tora...
What's wrong!?
TMP
TMP
Why is Kazama-senpai going?
It was Nao-senpai who broke her string.
Who knows?
Sit here!
WHUMP
Yes!
Take a deep breath through your nose...
...and hold it!
Focus on your whole body...
...then let it out slowly.
Can you do that?
NOD
Let it go...
Stop.
Deeply...
Woo.
Phew.
Woo.
Phew.

Huh?
Nervous?
Are you still nervous?
This is a ninja breathing technique.
Show me your usual shot... the beautiful shot I know.
Then calm down!
It's an important match, right?
Yeah, I'm good now.
Good.
Kage-tora...

RUFFLE
All right! Then go get 'em!
!
Yeah...
We should go back.
I wasn't nervous...
No.
Did you need to rest?
Huh?
Nao?

I'm okay.
I've decided.
?
Decided?
It's nothing. Let's go!
?
Okay.
THUNK

TWANG
THUNK
Yeah.
She's back to her usual self.
Yeah!
BUZZ
Bullseye!!

That's the beautiful form I know.
GRIN
THUNK
And the winner is...
...Touun Metro-politan High School.
Thank you very much!
Thank you very much!

Thank you, Kazama-san.
Please stop by anytime.
We'll be waiting.
Yeah.
Thank you!
Then we're done for today!
Thanks, guys.
Be careful going home.
Okay!
See you!
Do you have some time?
Kage-tora...
We should go home, too.
.....
Nao?
Buzz
Buzz
Well then...

To where?
Then can you come with me?
TURN
Yeah, I do.
?
Someplace good!
?
Someplace good?

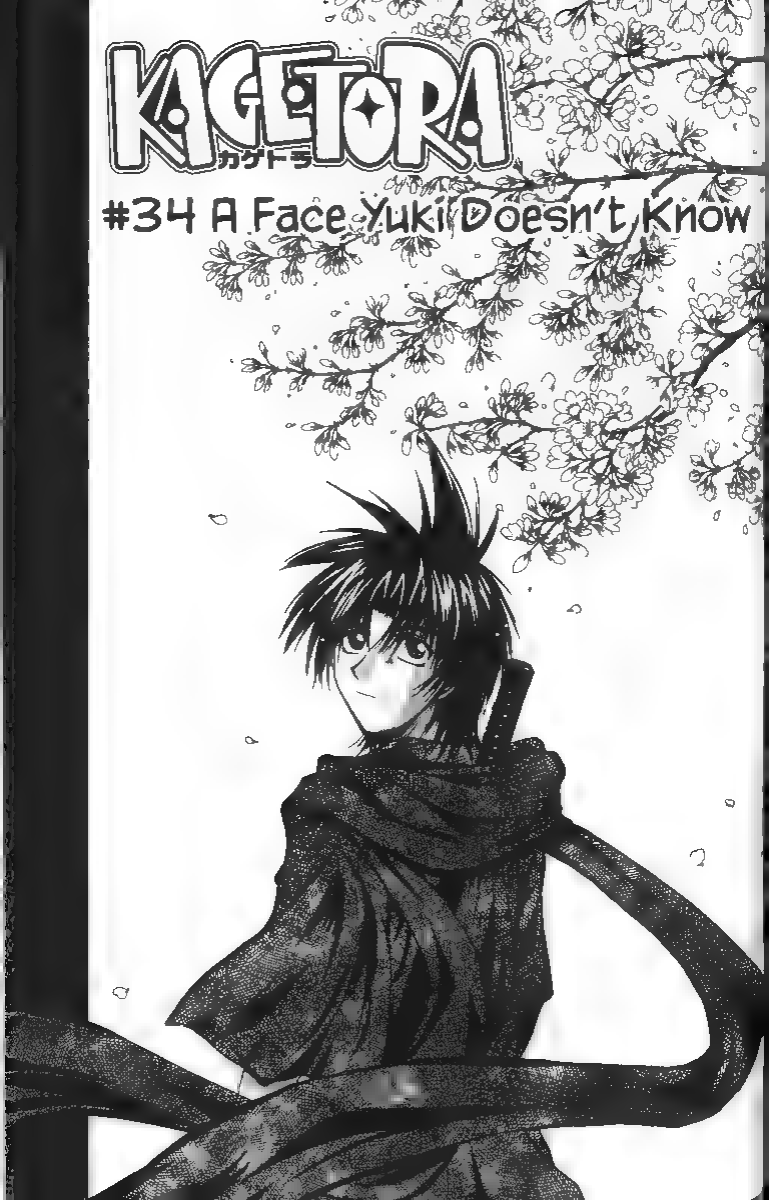
You meant here.
Yeah, the Hachiman-sama.
You came here to give thanks for the win.
The god of archery is here.
see
.....
Another?
Yeah.
There's also...
...another god.

For match-making...
TH-THUMP
Huh?
I like you.
.....

...like you, Kagetora!
I...
uh...

KAGETORA
カゲトラ

#34 A Face Yuki Doesn't Know



I like you.
...uh...
I...
...like you, Kagetora!

I thought I'd be okay just being friends.
Nao...
TAP
But...
TAP
Spending time with you until the match...
I couldn't do it.
I couldn't lie to myself.
Today is my last day with the archery club.

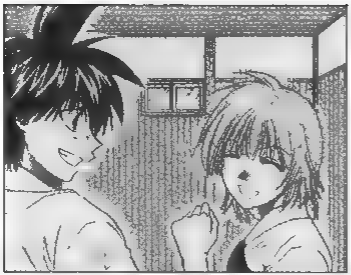
...want to keep seeing you.
I...
TAP
TH-THUMP
ドキン
TH-THUMP
ドキン
TH-THUMP
ドキン
Nao...

Sorry.
I'm flattered, but...
I...
Kagetora!
CLENCH

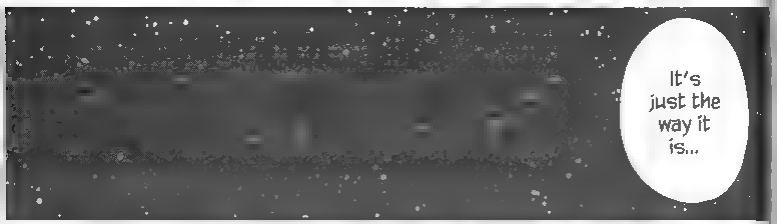
It's...
You didn't do anything wrong.
Hey... don't apologize.
...my fault...
...for liking you...
DROP
DROP
Oh...

Nao...
FLINCH
TURN
Sorry, I didn't mean to...
DASH
!?
...uh...

Nao!
.....



Part of me was happy she felt that way, but...
I wonder if I did the right thing.


It's just the way it is...

Takatou
SLAM
SIGH
ああ
Morning
Yo.
Morning, Nao.
Oh... Morning.
Huh?
Are your eyes red?
I was up late watching TV. And overslept.
Ha ha.
Infomercials?
Yeah, sort of.
You go on ahead.
Okay
I'm going to go put this away.
TRP
トイレ

Oh...
Oh, sorry.
Kage-tora.
DASH!
STING

DASHHH
DASHHH
Archery Club
Pant...
Pant...
What am I...
PANT...
...doing?
I can't...
I want to talk to him like before.

I shouldn't have said it.
SQUEEZE
I shouldn't have.
...said anything.
3-E

I thought I could stay friends with her.
She completely avoided me.
Nao...
.....
But that may be asking too much...
.....
So you're hanging out 'til then, huh?
Ha ha
CREAK
Not til third period.
When do your classes start?
Oh, but you came early with Yuki.
Oh... yeah.
Yuki! We have Japanese history next. Let's go.

How unusual of him not to come along.
Oh?
Okay
Well, Hime, enjoy your class.
SWOOSH
That's not true.
Usually he waits for you outside the classroom.
When he doesn't have class...
That's not true!!
Yuki?
What's wrong?
GASP
Oh...
Sorry. It's nothing.
But...
Let's go. Class is going to start.

I guess I'll never come again.
I've been coming here every day...
I came here without thinking.
Oh.
THUNK
SLIDE...
ガラ
Is someone here?
At this hour?

TWANG
THUNK
Nao...
PHEW

Huh!?
Kage-tora!? Why...
Oh, I heard some-thing.
Sorry, I didn't mean to bother you.
I'll see you.
TURN
Oh...
!?
TUG
Nao?
Oops.
SLAM
Ow!
I'm sorry!
It wasn't on purpose.

GRIN
Is your foot asleep again?
Huh...
Oh...
I just thought you could shoot a bit.
Ha ha ha
No, it's not.
I wasn't meditating.
You pulled me back, so...
Ha...

I guess I could.
Please don't look.
I've been doing badly today...
Are all those yours?
Uh... yeah.
Take a deep breath.
Hold it.
You remember the breathing technique, right?
You should try again.
Yeah.
I see.
.....

TWANG
THUNK
You're my archery teacher.
Yeah!
Bulls-eye!
It was a very good shot.

.....
Thanks.
Sorry about yesterday.
TRP
It's me who should apologize!
I...
You were honest, right?
So it's okay.

Okay.
Look...
Can I ask you something?
?
Do you like someone else?
!!
Uh...
.....
I just thought it'd be easier for me to move on if you do.
But don't worry about it!
If you don't want to.
Sorry. You don't have to answer.

Just like you said.
Nao...
That person is...
I do like someone.
Yuki Toudou.

Then I can't do anything about that.
I see.
.....
Huh!?
ずいっ
ZIP
You dork!
Why don't you just tell her!?
Geez!
You guys are so close!!
Kage-tora...
Ha ha
I'm kidding.
And I want to make sure of something.
Sorry.
So...
It's your fault!
If you had, I wouldn't have wasted my time!
ぷいっ
HMPH

Thanks.
You're still...
...my friend, right?
Hee hee
Why are you thanking me?
That's weird.
Is it?
Ha ha
It is weird.
Yeah, thanks.
Come by whenever you feel like it.
Any time.
I guess I should go soon.
Oh. First period is over.
BRRRIN
I can stay...
SLIDE

Until I find someone else...
I can stay...
...in love with Kagetora.
THUNK
That's the first time I've told anyone.
That person is...
I do like someone.
Yuki Toudou.

I can't.
Nao...
Why don't you just tell her?
Geez.
You guys are so close!!
I'm only a ninja with a duty.
Hime is my master.
We're like tools.
A ninja... follows orders.
I can never...
...get together with Hime.

I know it's stupid...
But I can't do anything about it.
I have to keep this feeling secret...
Kagetora.
Good job.
Yes, it was yesterday. We won.
Your match...
...is done, right?
Then let's go home.
Okay.

It's been a while since we've gone home together.
Yeah.
I just made new friends.
I was only a repiacement for the match.
You're not going to go to the archery club anymore?
I can focus on you now, Hime.
Sorry for taking off so many days.
Nao...
...is a good friend.
.....
Like Taka-tou-san?

What's wrong?
Hime?
Huh?
That's a face...
...you've never shown me before.
.....

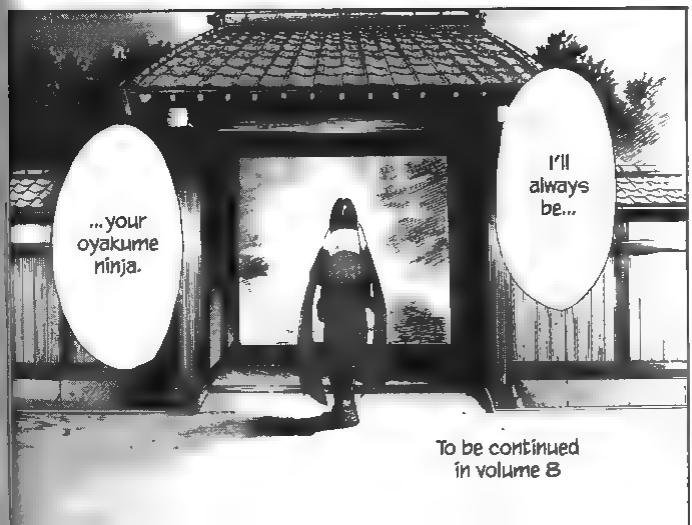
...uh...

What's wrong!?
Are you sick!?
Hime!?
I don't know...
ふわ FLOAT
Hime, excuse me!
WHOOSH

I'll get you home as soon as possible.
Okay...
Please hold on tight.
JUMP
Hime.
Are you okay?

SQUEEZE
ギュッ
.....
We're almost there.
Yeah.
Kage-tora...
?

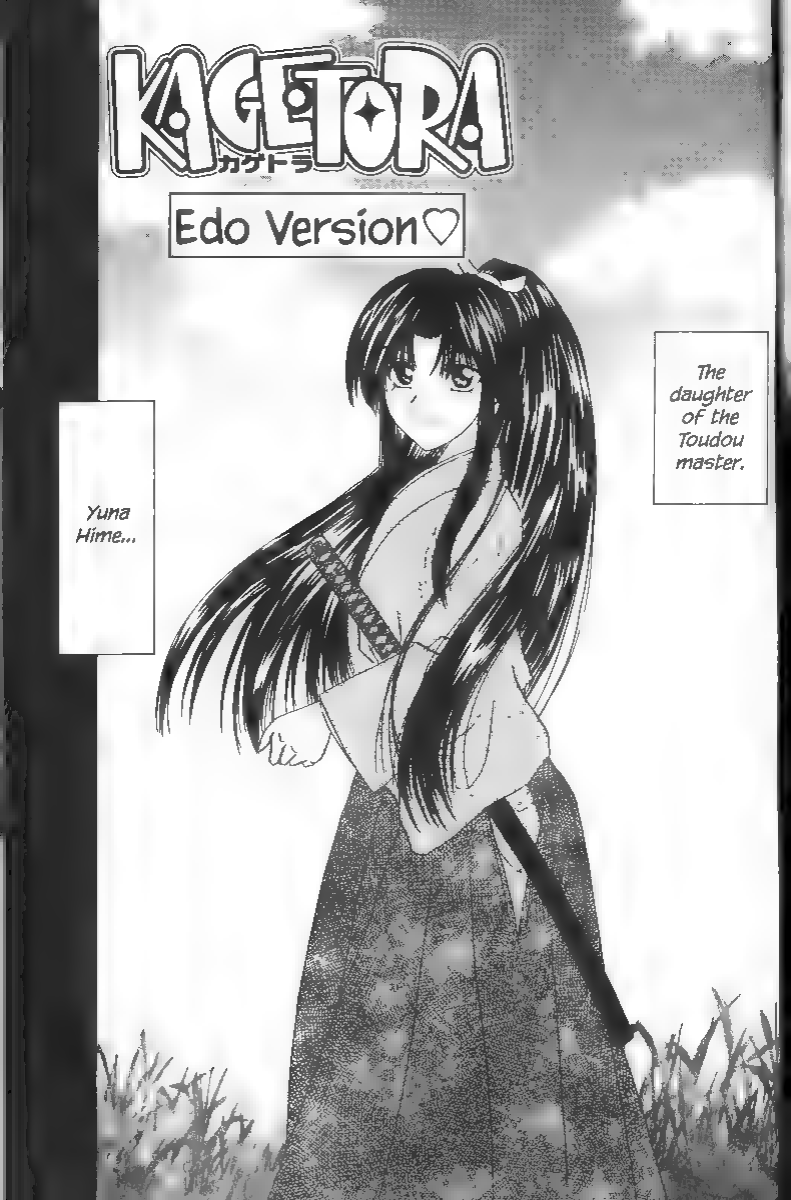
...my oyakume ninja forever, right?
You're going to be...

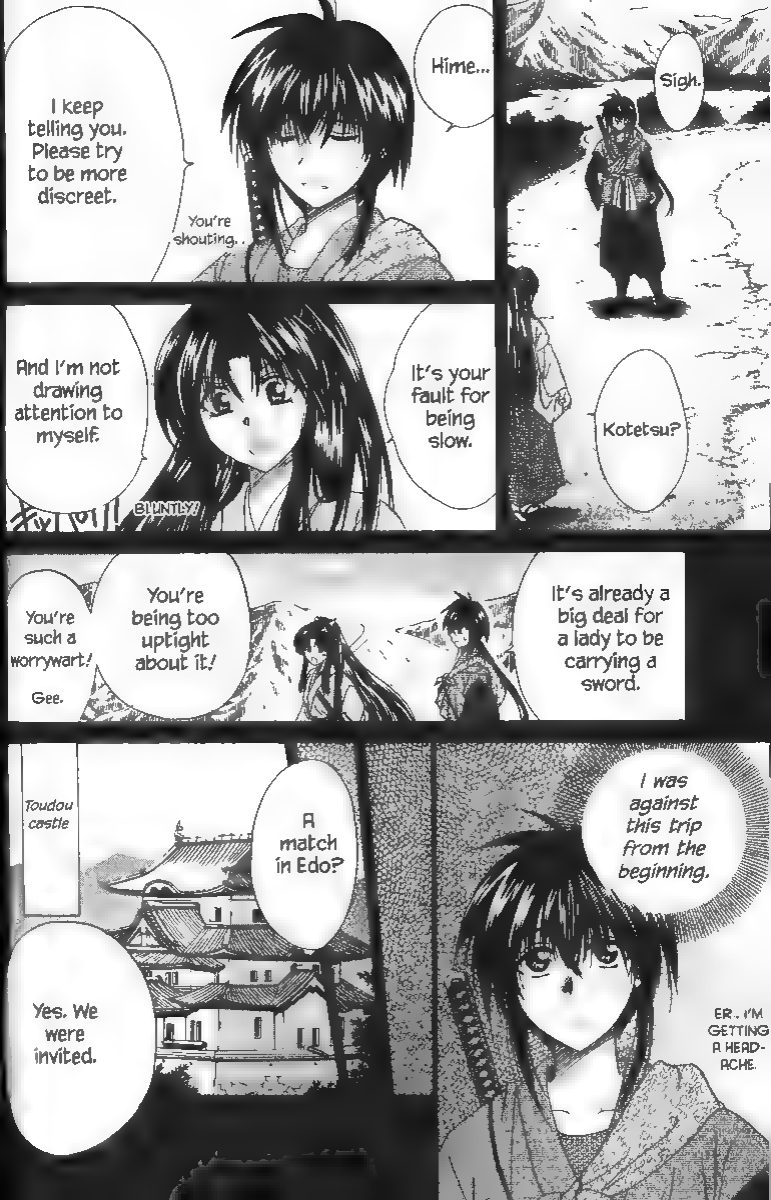


To be continued in volume 8

Hoorai Village
Kazama House
Huh!?
Clean the storage area!?
Ow ow ow ow ow!
What? You're not going to thank me for putting some meaning in your meaningless life?
PINCH
I understand that, but why me?
WHISPER
We have to clean it once in a while or they'll get damaged.
There are many important documents in here.
Shoot.
FLAP
Oops.
Good luck.
TMP
TMP
STING
Ow.
Clean this, huh?
Where should I start...
STUFFED

What's this?
FLIP..
A travel journal?
Hm.
Let's see.
By... Kotetsu Kazama.
Kazama... an ancestor.
I shall begin by writing about...
...the day I became the oyakume ninja for the Toudou master.
My duty was to protect someone during her trip to Edo.
And that someone was...
TMP
TMP
...
Hurry, Kotetsu!
I'm going to leave you behind.


KAGETORA
カゲトラ
Edo Version♡
Yuna Hime...
The daughter of the Toudou master.


I keep telling you. Please try to be more discreet.
Hime...
You're shouting.
Sigh.
And I'm not drawing attention to myself.
It's your fault for being slow.
Kotetsu?
BLUNTLY!
You're such a worrywart!
You're being too uptight about it!
It's already a big deal for a lady to be carrying a sword.
Gee.
Toudou castle
A match in Edo?
Yes. We were invited.
I was against this trip from the beginning.
ER.. I'M GETTING A HEADACHE.

Hime!?
I decided to have Yuna go.
So master, will you be going?
No...
They would like to see a woman from the House of Toudou show her skills.
She wanted to go.
She was excited.
Excuse me, master...
...I think it's too much for Hime.
That's why you're going.
Make sure you protect Yuna with your life!
GRIN
To travel to Edo at a time like this is risky.
Certain dangerous people are not happy with Toudou's success.
This is your duty.
Good luck.
Master...
There's so much pressure
Kotetsu!
.....
How can the master be so easygoing about this?

Kotetsu!
!!
What are you doing?
TWITCH
Oh, nothing...
WOOSH
Whoa.
WHUMP
TRIP
KONK
Are you okay!?
Ow...
Are you really a ninja?
I guess...
Ha ha
That's why everyone calls you a klutz.

I'll protect you!
But don't worry!
Well...
You're probably worried about assassins who are after me.
A kiutz...
Okay?
Thank you, Hime...
Ha ha.
Protecting you is my duty...
Hime...
So you should enjoy the scenery.
We don't get to travel much.
You're too straight laced.
What I need to do is to protect you.
GLARE
No!!
I am a ninja on duty.

SHOCK
ガーン
That doesn't sound all that reassuring coming from you.
Erg...
Kotetsu...
Oh!
That'll help...
But I guess I'll try not to stand out as much.
Hmph.
RUSTLE
Welcome.
Whoa.
TRIP
Hey! Hime! What did you just say!?
A tea shop!!
だっ!!
DASH!!
Wait, that's probably a Hoorai ninja.
There's only one guard. We can do him.
That's the Toudou daughter...

Anyway, we'll wait until the sun falls.
FOOSH
Under-stood.
FOOSH
Even if the ninja looks like an idiot, we can't take them too lightly.
You get distracted so easily
And the girl is from Toudou... it might not be so easy.
You think?
It's al- good.
We're going to be staying here for the night.
Hime
Morita House
Sorry. I don't think it's fit for you, Hime...
No, I don't care about that.
We can't stay any-where that stands out.
It's a little creepy...
And a smaller place will be easier to manage.

Welcome.
CREEP
Whoa!
Staying here?
Yes.
Can you prepare two rooms?
SIGH
TH-THUMP
TH-THUMP
FLINCH
SQUEEZE
Oh!
H'me?
LET GO
Oh, it's nothing!
It's absolutely nothing!!
Lady! Please show us to our rooms.
PUSH
The bath is ready, too.
That's good!
PUSH
?

Bathing Area
Well, Hime.
...so you can take your time and relax.
I'll be here...
Hime?
.....
KLUNK
KLUNK
Uh...
Yeah.
WOOSH
KLUNK?
KLUNK?
Quit joking and just go in!
What are you saying!?
SLAM
!?
EEP
Kotete
Mayb
you c
join m

That was bad for my heart.
. . . . . .
It's dark. .
Why did she kid like that?
Huh?
ime?
It's a little creepy...
She's not afraid of assassins.
No... not Hime.
Maybe she's scared?
She's the one who said...

I'll protect you!
Don't worry!
Do I look that unreliable?
sign.
DRAG
DRAG
DRAG
.....
To hear something like that...
...from a person you like is unbearable.

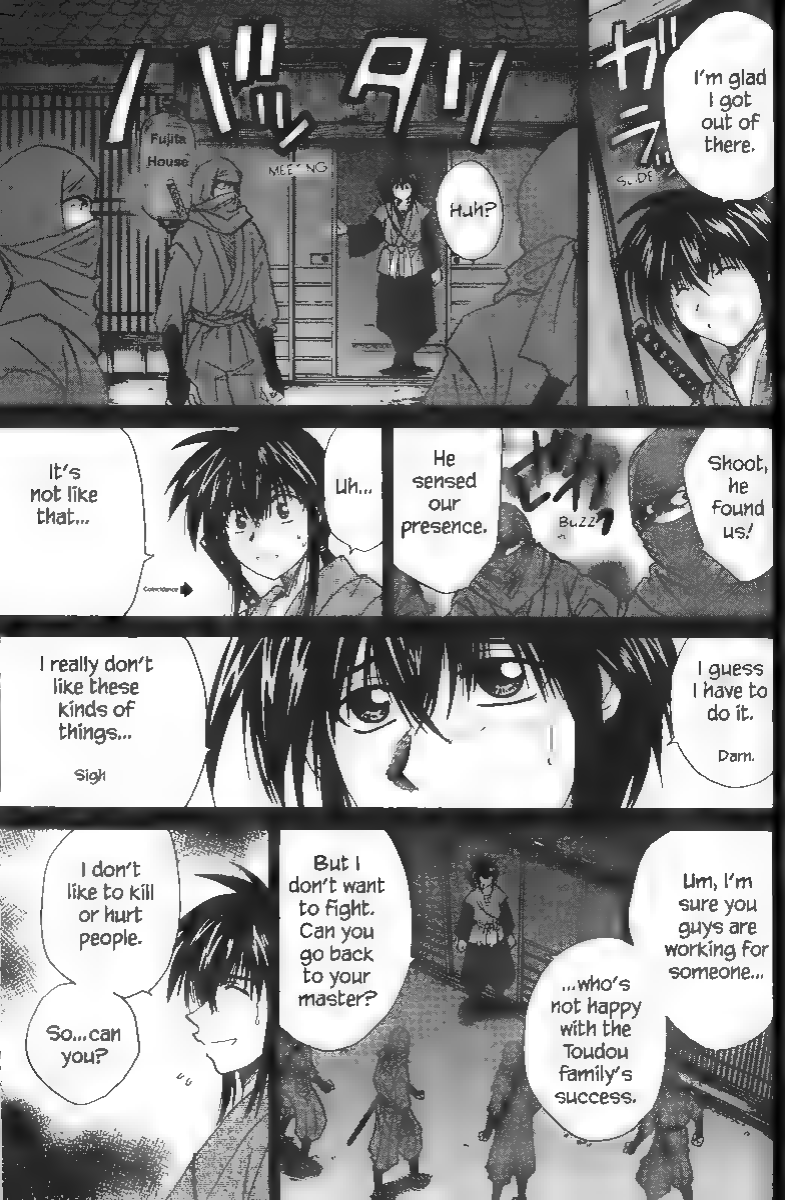
SLIDE
Kotetsu!
Hime!?
Why are you coming out!?
DRESSED LIKE THAT?
I think you should join me!
Come on!
What are you saying!?
Hurry and go back in!
Kotetsu!
TUG
TUG
PANIC
PANIC
You...
You're my oyakume ninja!
This is an order!!
...er.
URGH
SPLASH

You should come in, too.
Kotetsu.
This feels good.
I can finally relax.
Phew.
Stay calm... stay calm...
She doesn't think of me as a guy...
It feels good.
No thank you...
I'm on duty.
Huh?
You're such a dense ninja.
SPLASH
Please leave me alone.

I'm sorry!
SPLASH
Why did you turn around suddenly?
Stupid!
TURN
SPLASH
!
Ow!
KONK
STING
Are you okay?
Yes...
You're really not like a ninja.
I can't believe you got the oyakume.
I can't say anything.
I'M NOT GOOD AT THIS KIND OF THING.
Well, don't worry.
WHISPER
I'll become strong for you.

Are you okay?
Achoo
I'm talking to myself.
Huh?
I think you should come in!
Or you'll catch a cold.
Aaaack!!
TUG
Hime! Excuse me!
Kotetsu...

He is a klutz!
Did you cover the back doors?
Yeah.
Even an ant couldn't get through.
A Toudou daughter and a Hoorai ninja...
...but even they cannot face this many people.
Sigh.
That was bad


Fujita House
MEE NG
Huh?
I'm glad I got out of there.
It's not like that...
Uh...
Coincidence
He sensed our presence.
BUZZ
Shoot, he found us!
I really don't like these kinds of things...
Sigh
I guess I have to do it.
Darn.
I don't like to kill or hurt people.
So...can you?
But I don't want to fight. Can you go back to your master?
...who's not happy with the Toudou family's success.
Um, I'm sure you guys are working for someone...

Wait!
WOOSH!
I guess not!
Oh!
We'll take care of you first!!
ZWISH
Stop joking around!
TA-DAH

Then come and get me.
You idiots are after me, right?
Hime!?
I'll show you the Toudou martial arts!
No! There are too many!
No! I'll do it! I'm the oyakume ninja!
These are Toudou's enemies.
Hime! Why did you come out!?
I have to fight them!
Are they fighting?
Fighting?
I told you not to worry.
It's too dangerous for you.
Anyway! They are ninjas.
I won't back down!
Kotetsu?
GLOOM
She doesn't rely on me...

Well, got to admire her courage!
But we're still going to kill you.
SWISH
!!
Hime!
WOOSH
Yaah!

SLASH
Shoot
FOOSH!
Smoke bomb!?
THROW
No!

Gotcha!
CLANG
Kotetsu!

I don't like to kill...
...but you give me no choice.
Watch out.
Hime.
I want you to believe in me this one time.
Please wait here.
I will protect you!

Get him!
ZWISH
Go!
ZWISH
Kotetsu... he's usually a klutz.
It's not fair.
He turns into the best ninja at times like this.

Thanks for waiting.
Hime.
TA-DAH!
For not listening to my orders!
Hime? Why...
WHACK
Ow!
I said I was going to protect you...
I'm...
...sorry.

...you'll forever be my oyakume ninja!
Kotetsu! As punishment...
You'll be punished!
HMPH
No, I won't forgive you!
Huh...
Punished >>
You have to stay with me forever.
And this is an order!

I'd love to!!
Hime...
Then it's settled.
Good!
I see...
Yes, Hime!
Let's go!
Now we have to go to Edo!

I wonder if he had things he couldn't write...
Kotetsu...
There are bits and pieces that are very vague.
Hmm...
And she won the match.
Hm...
That's good...
!!
GLOOM
FLINCH
Kage-tora...
Um... I got caught up in this journal.
I see...
What were you doing?
Hm?
It doesn't look clean at all.
Yes!
DASH
DASH
But you'll start cleaning, right?

I guess he didn't read the ending.
SLAM
ばたん
. . . . . .
STAGGER
わた
わた
STAGGER
Kagetora was reading this.
I see.
LIFT
ひょい
I don't want him to get his hopes up.
I'm so nice.
I guess I should put this away.
You said forever...
...but when you get married, am I going to work there, too?
Huh?
By the way...
P.S.

Side Story ♡ Fin

Bonus Page

This is Segami. There are a couple of things that happened for this volume. Like the inclusion of a story I did before. Well, as long as you enjoyed it, that's good enough for me. (laugh)

About Ninjas - Part 7

I have a lot of ninja materials now. I have interesting things. I have weapons and books, of course, but I have videotapes, too. What's funny is that it has a cautionary note in there, too. "Please do not try any of the things introduced in this video because it is dangerous." I can't do anything in the video anyway, maybe poking eyes, but that's about it. I guess I can't become a ninja.

About Traveling

I went to Aichi prefecture to eat blowfish. It was really good. On the way there, I stopped by a bird park. I was able to touch a penguin! A penguin! I was so happy!! I always wanted to touch one!! It was a little slippery. The park was fun. You get to feed different birds. But I don't think that's safe. Sometimes it hurts. And I think it's a little dangerous to leave peacocks out, too. But it's fun.

About Cats

The cat I wrote about in volume 3—the little one—died. (cry) He tried his best until the end. The most difficult thing about having pets is when they go. But he gave me many memories. So I would like to be thankful.

About Moving

I moved again. I am now closer to the publishers. I used the same movers as before. I was watching them, amazed by how efficient they are when I heard a loud noise. They knocked the naginata against the sword sheath. Now there's a small mark on my naginata. (cry)

Thank You

Thank you very much for your letters! I have readers who saw my ad in the *Weekly Shonen Magazine* and started reading. It makes me happy to hear that! I'm also happy when readers tell me they were accepted into college (laugh) and I enjoy reading the letters. I'll continue to work hard writing back. ♪

Special Thanks

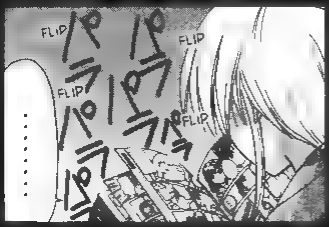
Assistants: Tanaka-kun, Oshima-chan
Helper: Takeda, Kensui-sama
Editor: Mr. Morita
Comics Editor: Houjou-san
And all the readers ♡

I'll see you in volume 8.
Thanks for the very real advice...
Did it happen to you?
Hm...
I think you'll have many hardships, but good luck.
Kagetora.
HARDSHIPS... THERE WILL BE MANY.

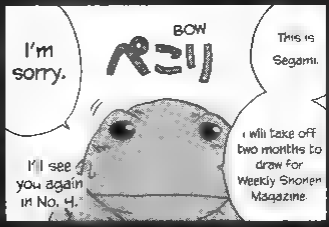
Kotetsu

KAGETORA

How it Goes



Explanation



I took time off from Magazine Special No. 2 and No. 3 for ZOOS and was drawing KAGETORA for Weekly Shonen Magazine.

The readers will wonder...
At this point in the story!?
We'll take off No. 2 and No. 3 and draw four times in Weekly Mag.
WHAT!?
I'm sorry readers!

Two months like this.

This four-panel comic was drawn when the author took a break from No. 2 and No. 3.

We'll have those episodes in the comics, so please look forward to them!

Taka's Secret Next Issue Preview

Starring Kosuke

About the Author

Segami's first manga was published by Shogakukan in 1996. He went on to do a few other small projects, including two short stories entitled "Kagetora" in 2001 and 2002. The character proved to be popular with fans, so Segami began his first ongoing series, *Kagetora*, with Kodansha in 2003. The series continues to run today.

Translation Notes

Japanese is a tricky language for most Westerners, and translation is often more art than science. For your edification and reading pleasure, here are notes on some of the places where we could have gone in a different direction in our translation of the work, or where a Japanese cultural reference is used.

***Hanare*, page 5**

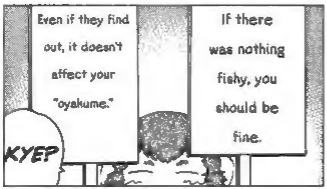
Hanare is a detached building, separate from the main building in classical Japanese homes. Usually farm machines and implements are kept inside the *hanare*.

***Tekoukagi*, page 14**

Tekoukagi is a weapon ninjas put on their hands. They can use it to climb trees or claw into wood, or they can use it to attack enemies.

***Makibishi*, page 15**

Makibishi is a weapon ninjas leave on the ground when they are being chased. Ninjas usually carry them in bamboo tubes.



***Oyakume*, page 28**

Oyakume translates as "a duty." Its use in this book is more formal, suggesting a specific and honored duty.

Coffee milk, page 30

Coffee milk is similar to chocolate milk. However instead of chocolate syrup, coffee syrup is used. In Japan, coffee milk is often drunk at public baths. In the United States, coffee milk is hard to find outside of the New England region (where it can be found in the dairy case next to chocolate milk). Travelers requesting it in other areas are often mistakenly served coffee with milk. Interestingly, it is the official state drink of Rhode Island.

***Hachiman-sama*, page 118**

Nao and Kagetora are visiting the Tsuruoka Hachimangu, a famous shrine in Kamakura. Nao calls the god *"Hachiman-sama"* for short.

Kotetsu and Yuna, page 158-159

Kotetsu's name has the same kanji for "tora" in Kagetora's name. Yuna's name has the same kanji for "Yu" in Yuki's name.

Edo, page 158
Japan's Edo Period lasted from 1603 to 1867. It was governed by the Tokugawa Shogunate. Edo is also the name of old Tokyo, where Kotetsu and Yuna are headed for the match.

***Naginata*, page 189**
A *naginata* is a long-handled sword. It looks like a spear with a short sword at the tip of it. In modern Japan, it is often used in martial arts for women.

THREE'S A CROWD

Though sworn to protect and train Yuki, heir to the Toudou martial arts family, Kagetora has fallen in love with her—and the forbidden feelings are mutual. But when Nao Takatou, a talented archer and spunky tomboy, enters the picture, Kagetora finds himself thinking about another girl—much to Yuki's dismay.

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